

Overview Pieces designed for automated flats processing (C820) could include pieces that, if not prepared as an automation flat, would be considered flat-size, letter-size, or irregular parcels under C050. For eligibility and preparation standards for specific rate discounts, see the appropriate Quick Service Guides: 141 First-Class Automation Flats, 241 Periodicals Automation Flats, or 641 Standard Mail Automation Flats. Size, weight, thickness, polywrap, and flexibility standards vary for mail processed on the Flat Sorting Machine (FSM) 881 and the FSM 1000.

Characteristics and Content (C820) Shape: rectangular.
Dimensions: see reverse.
Maximum weight:
■ First-Class Mail: 13 ounces.
■ Periodicals: 16 ounces for FSM 881, 6 pounds for FSM 1000.
■ Standard Mail: less than 16 ounces.
Prohibitions: polywrapped, polybagged, and shrinkwrapped pieces are prohibited unless specifically approved by a manager, business mail entry (a list of approved polywrap and polywrap manufacturers is available on the USPS Web site). Clasps, strings, buttons, or other protrusions (C820.5).
Each piece in an automation flat-size mailing must contain a complete delivery address (A010).
Polywrapped pieces that meet the dimensions, flexibility, and rigidity standards for the FSM 881 in C820.2 must meet all polywrap criteria in C820.4.5. Polywrapped pieces that do not meet the flexibility or rigidity standards in C820.2 but do meet the FSM 1000 standards in C820.3 may be processed on the FSM 1000. FSM 1000 pieces may be prepared with polywrap that meets only property number 2, haze, in Exhibit C820.4.1a (not required if address label is on the outside of polywrapped piece).
Polywrapped pieces must be endorsed to show they are automation-compatible (C820.4.3).
Folded publications:
■ A flat-size piece with a final fold must be designed so that the address is in view when the final folded edge is to the right and any intermediate bound or folded edge is at the bottom.
■ Unbound tabloids must have two folds. The second fold must be perpendicular to the original fold.

Mailpiece Length and Height Length and height of an automation-compatible flat-size piece are determined by the following:
For FSM 881 and FSM 1000
■ For pieces prepared as a single sheet or in an envelope, full length wrapper, or full length sleeve, the length is the longest dimension. The height is the dimension perpendicular to the length.
For FSM 881 (C820.2)
■ For a piece with a bound, folded, or closed edge (e.g., newspaper, tabloid, or catalog), the *height* (vertical dimension) is the dimension *parallel* to the bound, folded, or closed edge. The length is the dimension perpendicular to the height. If the piece is folded more than once or is bound and then folded, the height of the piece is based on the final fold.
For FSM 1000 (C820.3)
■ For a piece with a bound, folded, or closed edge (e.g., newspaper, tabloid, or catalog), the *length* is the dimension *parallel* to the folded or bound edge. The height (vertical dimension) is the dimension perpendicular to the bound, folded, or closed edge.

Barcodes (C840) Barcodes must be in one of these four positions:
■ Above the address line containing the recipient's name.
■ Below the city, state, and ZIP Code line.
■ Above or below the keyline information.
■ Above or below the optional endorsement line.
Barcodes must be at least 1/8 inch from any edge of the address side (for FSM 1000 pieces, at least 2 inches from the length, as defined above, is preferred). Additional standards apply for address block barcodes.

This guide is an overview only. For the specific DMM standards applicable to this category of mail, consult the DMM sections referenced above and the general sections within each DMM module.

Designing Flats for Automated Processing

Flat Sorting Machine (FSM) 881

Length Minimum: 5 inches long *if 6 to 7-1/2 inches high*; or not less than 5-3/8 inches long *if more than 7-1/2 inches high but no more than 9-1/2 inches high*.
Maximum: 15 inches

Height Minimum: 6 inches
Maximum: 12 inches

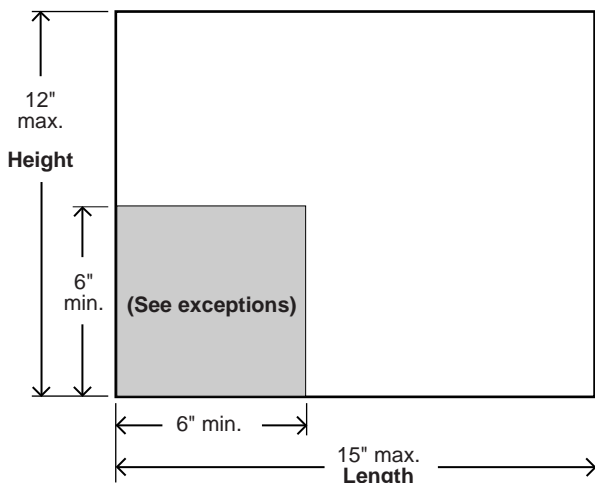
Thickness Minimum: 0.009 inch
Maximum: 3/4 inch

Flexibility Must meet flexibility requirements in C820.2.5.

Polywrapped Pieces Must meet all seven properties in Exhibit C820.4.1a.

Mailpiece Identification Polywrap marking: "USPS FSM 881 Approved Polywrap" or "USPS 881 Approved Poly" (on address side, preferably below postage area).

Dimensions



Flat Sorting Machine (FSM) 1000

Minimum: 4 inches
Maximum: 15-3/4 inches

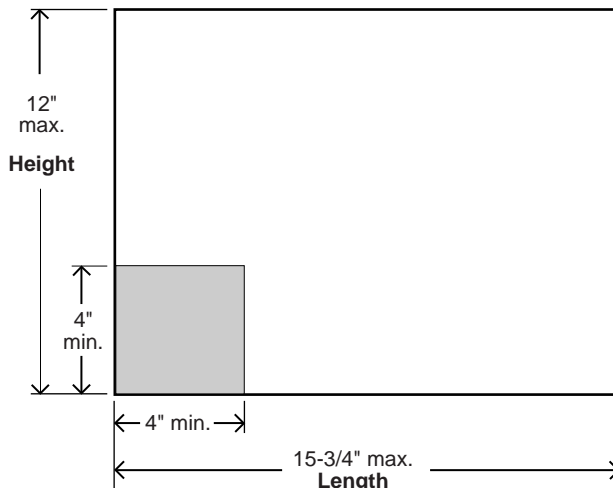
Minimum: 4 inches
Maximum: 12 inches

Minimum: Pieces at least 4 inches but less than 5 inches long, greater than 1/4 inch thick. Pieces at least 5 inches long, 0.009 inch thick.
Maximum: Pieces 13 inches long or less, 1-1/4 inches thick. Pieces longer than 13 inches up to and including 15-3/4 inches, 7/8 inch thick.

No requirement.

Must meet property number 2, haze, in Exhibit C820.4.1a (not required if address label is on the outside of polywrapped piece).

Polywrap marking: "USPS FSM 1000 Approved Polywrap" or "USPS 1000 Approved Poly" (on address side, preferably below postage area).



Exceptions:

May be a minimum of 5" in length if height is 6" to 7-1/2".

or

May be a minimum of 5-3/8" in length if height is more than 7-1/2" but no more than 9-1/2".

